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ABSTRACT

Express routing, under consideration by San Diego (California) Public Schools, is a form of bus transportation that picks up and drops off students at centralized points instead of driving through residential neighborhoods. This report examines other, similar districts' experiences in applying express routing in integration and other school programs. Questionnaires were mailed to the transportation departments of 15 districts employing express routing; shortened questionnaires were sent to 7 other school districts that had previously studied, implemented, and later discontinued, or were about to start, express routing service. Responses from 10 of the 15 and 2 of the 7 districts, respectively, reported that express routing leads to cost savings and related benefits: more efficient use of transportation resources, simplified routing, and shorter bus rides. Some problems experienced, particularly managing large groups of students gathered in one place and complaints regarding increased walking distances, appear to be manageable and apparently have not led to losses in desegregation program enrollments. Appendixes attached to the report contain copies of the questions used to identify school districts using express routing, copies of the questionnaires, and lists of districts contacted and responding. A second survey contacted a total of 31 site administrators and integration program officials in 5 districts from the first survey. On the whole, satisfaction with express routing was relatively high across the board. Survey forms are appended. (MLF)

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San Diego City Schools
PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND EVALUATION DIVISION

ED300867

# EXPRESS ROUTING TRANSPORTATION SURVEYS

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EA 020 153

**JANUARY 14, 1987**

**RESEARCH DEPARTMENT REPORT**



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# EXPRESS ROUTING TRANSPORTATION SURVEYS

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January 14, 1987

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

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SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division
Research Department

# EXPRESS ROUTING TRANSPORTATION SURVEY
# (Part I)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Issue/Concern

The district is exploring the use of express routing for its voluntary integration program in order to reduce the costs of transporting students. Express routing is a form of bus transportation which picks up and drops off students at centralized points (e.g., school sites and major traffic arteries) instead of driving through residential neighborhoods to provide quasi door-to-door service.

This report examines other, similar districts' experiences in applying express routing in integration and other school programs. All data are derived from a questionnaire that San Diego City Schools sent to selected school districts' transportation departments across the country.

### Recommendations

This report is primarily informational. However, although the findings regarding express routing are not totally conclusive, they are on the whole supportive of that bus routing scheme. The Study Committee on Express Routing Transportation Services should give further consideration to express routing as a significant cost-saving measure. Additional insight about planning a future express routing system might also be gained by contacting integration program officials and other individuals from the surveyed districts who deal with pickup point discipline problems.

### Rationale

Other school districts across the country similar to San Diego have found various benefits from express routing: cost savings and related more efficient use of transportation resources, simplified routing, and shorter bus rides. Some problems have also been experienced, particularly those associated with managing large groups of students gathered in one place and complaints regarding increased walking distances. These problems appear to be manageable and apparently have not led to losses in desegregation program enrollments. This report, however, does not reflect the experience of four districts that discontinued express routing.

While the exact magnitude of the benefits and problems is not determinable from this survey, on the whole the positive benefits of express routing outweigh the negative consequences.

### Budget Implications

Express routing merits further consideration. The consideration *per se* has little, if any, budget implications. Adoption of express routing sometime in the future would likely reduce transportation costs, especially after initial start-up efforts.

PDB:ak

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division
Research Department

# EXPRESS ROUTING TRANSPORTATION SURVEY
# (Part I)

## Issue/Concern

Currently, the district employs a form of residential bus service to transport students participating in the district's voluntary integration program to and from their schools. This school transportation service, which picks up and drops off students in their residential neighborhoods--typically at neighborhood bus stops--has been cited in the past as an "expensive" approach.

The district is considering employment of a form of express routing, which consolidates neighborhood bus stops into centralized pickup/dropoff points at local school sites or on major transportation arteries and would make more efficient use of the district's limited financial resources.

This report to the Study Committee on Express Routing Transportation Services reviews current applications of express routing in other school districts operating integration programs.

## Background

On December 10, 1985, Board of Education President Larry Lester presented a proposal to consider school-to-school express routing of transportation services for the district's voluntary integration program. Mr. Lester estimated the potential benefits and impact of converting from current neighborhood pickup transportation service to express routing to be significant.

Soon thereafter the Assistant Superintendent, Business Services Division, appointed a committee of staff and parents representing a wide range of interests and expertise in the voluntary integration program to review the proposal. The committee developed a survey questionnaire to review and research current applications of express routing in other school districts operating integration programs.

In July 1986, this Study Committee on Express Routing Transportation Services requested the Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division (PRE) to conduct a survey of other large school districts, reviewing and revising the questionnaire survey as necessary. PRE revised the survey instrument and finished the task of screening 46 school districts regarding their transportation program, a task begun by the Transportation Department. Basic criteria that districts had to meet were that they:

- operate a desegregation/integration program or transport students because of enrollments that exceed the capacities of facilities at some schools (hereafter referred to as "enrollment balancing"), and
- transport 10,000 or more students daily, and
- operate a bus fleet (district-owned or private) of at least 200 buses, and

- employ a transportation service that does not pick up students in their neighborhoods but instead requires students to walk to school campuses or other central locations and collect in large groups for pickup and delivery, and

- express a willingness to participate in a survey of district transportation.

Fifteen school districts, including two from southern California, were identified as currently using transportation services similar to express routing for either desegregation or enrollment balancing efforts. Seven other school districts also were identified that had previously studied, implemented and later discontinued, or were about to start express routing service. Questionnaires were mailed in early August to the transportation departments of fifteen districts employing express routing. Shortened questionnaires were sent in late August to the other seven.

After multiple telephone calls and two letters to each district, ten of fifteen and two of the seven districts, respectively, responded. These response rates might have been higher had the surveys not been disseminated at a time when transportation departments are exceptionally busy. This report summarizes the more important findings of the longer survey, occasionally making reference to the much shorter survey.

The questionnaire itself consisted of six main sections.

- Identification--identifies the district and the respondent;

- Background Information--provides background information concerning the district and its transportation program;

- Features of Racial Desegregation/Integration and School Facilities Utilization Optimizing Programs--determines presence or absence and chief characteristics of these programs;

- Transportation Service Parameters--spells out levels of transportation service provided for these programs and provides details concerning bus transportation service;

- Impact of Transportation Services Restricted to School Site Pickups/ Delivery--sets out details of centralized pickup, including supervision and special measures, problems and impact of express routing; and

- Evaluation of Centralized Pickup/School Site Transportation Services--provides an overall evaluation of centralized pickup.

This report summarizes the findings of the survey. Specifically, it:

- outlines some of the chief parameters of the responding districts and their basic transportation system;

- summarizes the common features and differences among districts regarding the programs considered in this questionnaire (magnet schools, allied/paired schools, and busing to optimize utilization of school facilities);

- o examines the parameters of these districts' express routing and related transportation services;
- o outlines the benefits perceived by responding districts to be associated with express routing;
- o summarizes the problems perceived by responding districts to be associated with express routing; and
- o examines the effects of express routing on racial desegregation/integration program enrollments.

Several appendices are attached to the report:

- o copies of the questions used by the Transportation Department and PRE, respectively, to identify school districts using forms of express routing in the area of school desegregation (Appendix A);
- o a copy of the full survey questionnaire sent to 16 districts (Appendix B) including cover letter and definitions;
- o a copy of the abbreviated survey questionnaire sent to seven districts (Appendix C), including cover letter and definitions;
- o a list of the districts contacted for consideration for inclusion in the survey (Appendix D); and
- o lists of the districts indicating to whom the surveys were sent and which districts responded (Appendix E).

## Discussion/Findings

Responding Districts. All ten districts responding to the questionnaire are unified K-12 districts. In size, the districts range from 36,000 (Norfolk) to 600,000 (Los Angeles) students. Half the districts responding are in the 65,000-95,000 student range. Geographic size ranges similarly from 62 square miles (Norfolk) to 710 (Los Angeles), with 6 of 10 falling in the 95-175 square mile range. Numbers of school sites correlated highly with numbers of students, ranging from 54 in Norfolk to 644 in the Los Angeles Unified School District, with 6 of 10 falling in the 100 (actually 99) to 200 interval. Table 1 summarizes these district characteristics.

Transportation budgets varied from $6,000,000 in Long Beach and Wichita to $101,000,000 annually in Los Angeles. It is possible that some of budgets were understated, possibly not including state reimbursements. Eight of the ten districts had transportation budgets less than $22,000,000. As a portion of the total district budgets, transportation ranged from 2.4 to 10.0 percent (vis-a-vis San Diego's 4.5 percent). Seven of ten districts fell in the 4 to 7 percent range.

Table 1

District Parameters

| District | Enrollment | Size Sq. Miles | Sites | Transportation Budget |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baton Rouge | 65,000 | 475 | 114 | $ 14,000,000 |
| Dallas | 140,000 | 147 | 200 | 13,000,000 |
| Long Beach | 65,000 | 129 | 80 | 6,000,000 |
| Los Angeles | 600,000 | 710 | 644 | 101,000,000 |
| Louisville | 92,000 | 175 | 158 | 16,500,000 |
| Milwaukee | 93,000 | 96 | 150 | 21,500,000 |
| Nashville | 65,000 | 533 | 119 | 8,900,000 |
| Norfolk | 36,000 | 62 | 54 | 6,400,000 |
| Philadelphia | 197,000 | 144 | 263 | 52,400,000 |
| Wichita | 45,000 | 151 | 99 | 6,000,000 |
| San Diego | 113,000 | 207 | 151 | 17,700,000 |

Districts transported varied numbers and percentages of students. Several districts indicated that their busing totals could not be determined by adding busing totals associated with various programs due to overlap. Since no total busing figures were requested, none are reported here. However, Table 2 shows the various districts' busing figures (as a percentage of total enrollment) for integration and enrollment balancing programs. Note that in some cases figures are high because all schools are in the enrollment balancing programs and the students specifically bused for that purpose cannot be easily isolated.

Table 2

Students Transported for Integration and/or Enrollment Balancing
Percentage of Total Enrollment

| District | Integration | Enrollment Balancing | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Baton Rouge | 58.9 | 0.0 | 58.9 |
| Dallas | 10.8 | 0.0 | 10.8 |
| Long Beach | N/A | N/A | 21.0 |
| Los Angeles | 9.3 | 2.0 | 11.3 |
| Louisville | 12.0 | 7.8 | 19.8 |
| Milwaukee | 46.5 | 0.0 | 46.5 |
| Nashville | 0.0 | 64.2 | 64.2 |
| Norfolk | 26.6 | 0.0 | 26.6 |
| Philadelphia | 4.3 | 0.1 | 4.4 |
| Wichita | 13.8 | 0.0 | 13.8 |
| San Diego | 12.5 | 0.0 | 12.5 |

Total student busing in integration or enrollment balancing programs ranges from a low of 4.4 percent of the total district enrollment in Philadelphia to a high of 64.2 percent in the Nashville area. Philadelphia's total may be underestimated because it may not include junior and senior high school students given free public transit bus tokens to reach their magnet schools; Norfolk's is probably overestimated because it includes all busing except for Special Education students. Nashville--more accurately Davidson County--is a countywide school system.

The most common pattern of ownership of district busing fleets (5 of 10) was ownership split between the district and private companies. In three cases the district totally owned the fleet and in two cases private companies provided all transportation. Public transportation played but a minimal role in two cases, providing but a few buses or being essentially uncountable.

The size distribution of buses within the fleets used by districts generally follows a common pattern: a bimodal distribution with the chief mode generally at or above the 47-passenger level and a second mode at the 1-20 level. Six districts follow this pattern, while two (Long Beach and Milwaukee) reverse it. Philadelphia has basically a single modal distribution, peaking at 65-76, and Nashville has its secondary peak at 21-31, not 1-20. This distribution of buses is significant, for the larger buses are probably better suited to express routing. Not all districts own a bus fleet with an ideal fleet breakdown of buses by size. However, many manage to maintain a good distribution by using contractor resources to fill in "holes" in their own fleets. Such use of combinations of resources may make it possible to shift busing programs without severe capital outlay problems for the district.

Table 3

Percentage Distribution of Bus Size by District

| | Districts | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Size | BR | DALL | LB | LA | LOUIS | MILW | NASH | NORF | PHIL | WICH |
| 1-20 | 14.9 | 27.6 | 41.0 | 20.1 | 11.6 | 44.1 | 0.0 | 28.5 | 8.1 | 42.1 |
| 21-31 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 11.8 | 0.0 | 5.8 | 27.1 | 0.0 | 2.1 | 0.0 |
| 32-46 | 0.0 | 5.5 | 0.0 | 9.3 | 5.1 | 5.2 | 4.7 | 0.0 | 15.0 | 0.0 |
| 47-64 | 85.1 | 0.0 | 8.3 | 9.3 | 5.7 | 30.9 | 0.0 | 71.5 | 10.2 | 0.0 |
| 65-76 | 0.0 | 66.3 | 10.7 | 0.9 | 77.6 | 14.0 | 21.2 | 0.0 | 64.6 | 57.9 |
| 77-89 | 0.0 | 0.6 | 38.5 | 47.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 47.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 90+ | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Six of ten districts used one method only of developing and scheduling routes: one computer-generated; two computer-assisted; and three hand-written. Two used a combination of computer-assisted and manual routing and two used a combination of all three methods.

In summary, a typical district in this study has from 65,000 to 95,000 students enrolled in an area of 95 to 175 square miles at 100 to 200 sites, spending from four to seven percent of their total budgets on transportation. Half the districts bused 10 to 21 percent of their students in desegregation or enrollment balancing programs. Districts often used both district- and privately-owned bus fleets and maintained a bimodal size distribution of buses. San Diego shares most of these features.

Programs. Nine of the ten districts operate one or more magnet schools, nine* use paired or allied schools to improve racial balance, and six transport students to improve school facilities utilization. Among the magnet programs, four are now court-mandated (of which one was originally voluntary) and five are voluntary (of which one was originally court-ordered). Of the nine districts busing students to allied or paired schools for the purposes of desegregation, three have court-ordered programs and six voluntary (of which two were originally court-mandated). Finally, all six districts having programs to balance school enrollments through busing are doing so on a non-court-mandated basis.

Student participation is voluntary in all nine magnet programs, in six of the nine paired/allied school desegregation programs (one district has some voluntary and some mandatory participation), and in two of six school facilities utilization improvement programs. Four of the nine districts with magnet schools allow students to select their school of choice, while five assign students (one district does this if the student's first choice is filled; one district did not indicate how determination is made). For the paired/allied school programs, eight of the nine districts assign the students to a school (one doing this if the student's first choice was filled), and two allow students to choose. Finally, in school utilization programs, five of six districts assign students (again, one district assigns only if the student's choice is filled), and two allow students to select.

Enrollment criteria for the programs vary considerably. There are frequently multiple criteria. Six of the nine magnet programs restrict enrollment by performance criteria, four by geographic location, and three by ethnicity. Three practice open enrollment and one uses "previous enrollment" as an enrollment criterion.

Six of the nine paired/allied school integration programs restrict enrollment by grade level, while five restrict enrollment by ethnicity. One uses performance criteria and one allows only majority-to-minority transfer.

Finally, among the six school utilization optimization programs, four restrict enrollment to certain grade levels and one uses performance criteria. Three use other criteria: "racial/ethnic balance, if possible"; "residences"; or "first come, first served--latecomers are assigned to other schools, especially also to improve racial/ethnic balance of receiving school."

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*The tenth district has the establishment of better ethnic/racial balance, when possible, as one of its school facilities utilization program goals.

Express Routing and Other Transportation Parameters. Strictly speaking, only six of the districts utilize "express routing" in transportation for desegregation or school utilization optimization purposes. Here express routing is understood as restricting bus stops or pickup points to major streets and to school campuses. The other districts make use of neighborhood pickup. Six districts use express routing for magnet school programs (one for grades 4-12, two for grades 7-12 only), two districts for paired/allied school (one for grades 7-12 only), and four districts for school utilization optimization (one for grades 7-12 only).

Little can be stated generally regarding student riding time on buses and walking distances to reach pickup points, except that the times and distances vary considerably. Times and distances vary more across districts with the same types of transportation than they do between express routing and nonexpress routing. In general, average transportation times range from 30 to 60 minutes on the bus, one way. Average distances walked range from one-tenth to one-half mile, while maximums range from one-quarter mile to two miles or even no maximum walking distance. Tables 4 and 5 display the data received for all districts for riding times and walking distances, specifically comparing districts utilizing express routing with those using neighborhood pickup.

The number of students collecting at central pickup points also varies considerably. Maximums range from 12 to 1500, with a median of 60. (The one school with 1500 used all sides of the campus and staggered pickup times to reduce group sizes to much more manageable levels.) Minimums range from 1 to 10 (one district had 300, but it uses centralized pickup for one summer school only). Averages range from three to 150 (not including the above summer school case), with a median of 7, and with three districts averaging 30 or more.

All ten districts indicated that hazards are identified that may affect bus stop assignment; for one district this is done by the state department of transportation. All ten considered traffic hazards to pedestrians, seven geographic or topographic hazards, three social or crime hazards, and two weather-related hazards. Five districts indicated that special crossing guards are provided for student access to bus stops or pickup points (in one case by the city).

In general, few special provisions are made for early dismissals. Four districts indicated they do not have early dismissal days or that no such provisions are made ("none"). One has early dismissal districtwide for one-half hour on Tuesdays, necessitating no special provisions. One district has inclement weather routing. Another district instructs pupils to remain out of buildings. A third has receiving school administrators notify sending schools in advance of scheduled early dismissal, and a fourth does "the best we can; buses tend to run late on second and third runs; [we] don't make heroic efforts; [we] try to eliminate [second and third runs?]."

Eight of the ten districts provide limited or regular bus service for athletic and after-school extra-curricular activities, especially for high schools. Two provide no service for such events.

Table 4

DISTRICT* RIDING TIMES
(in minutes)

| Magnet Schools Grade Level | | Express Routing | | | | | | Neighborhood Pickup | | | Public Trans. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| K-3 | Avg. | | | 35 | 50 | | 60 | 30 | - | 50 | + |
| | Max. | | | 40 | 75 | | 90 | 60 | 60 | 75 | + |
| 4-6 | Avg. | | 40 | 35 | 50 | | 60 | 30 | - | 50 | + |
| | Max. | | 60 | 40 | 75 | | 90 | 60 | 60 | 75 | + |
| 7-8 | Avg. | 40 | 40 | 35 | 50 | 30 | 60 | | - | | + |
| | Max. | 70 | 60 | 40 | 75 | 60 | 90 | | 60 | | + |
| 9-12 | Avg. | 40 | 40 | 35 | 50 | 30 | + | | - | | + |
| | Max. | 70 | 60 | 40 | 75 | 60 | + | | 60 | | + |
| **Paired/Allied Schools** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| K-3 | Avg. | | | | 30 | | | 45 | 30 | - | 60 60 40 |
| | Max. | | | | 45 | | | 95 | 60 | 60 | 72 90 50 |
| 4-6 | Avg. | | | | 30 | | | 45 40 | 30 | - | 60 60 40 |
| | Max. | | | | 45 | | | 95 60 | 60 | 60 | 72 90 50 |
| 7-8 | Avg. | | | | 30 | 30 | | 45 40 | | - | 60 60 40 |
| | Max. | | | | 45 | 60 | | 65 60 | | 60 | 72 90 50 |
| 9-12 | Avg. | | | | 30 | 30 | | 45 40 | | - | 60 + 40 |
| | Max. | | | | 45 | 60 | | 55 60 | | 60 | 72 + 50 |
| **School Utilization Optimization** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| K-3 | Avg. | | | 30 | 35 | | 30 | | - | 20 | |
| | Max. | | | 60 | 60 | | 60 | | - | 30 | |
| 4-6 | Avg. | | | 30 | 35 | | 30 | | - | 20 | |
| | Max. | | | 60 | 60 | | 60 | | - | 30 | |
| 7-8 | Avg. | | | 30 | 35 | - | 30 | | | 30 | 30 |
| | Max. | | | 60 | 60 | - | 60 | | | 45 | 50 |
| 9-12 | Avg. | | | 30 | 35 | - | | | | 30 | 30 |
| | Max. | | | 60 | 60 | - | | | | 45 | 50 |

*Vertical columns represent individual school districts
-No time given
+Public transportation (tokens)

Table 5

DISTRICT* WALKING DISTANCES
(in miles)

| Grade Level | | Express Routing | | | | | | Neighborhood Pickup | | | | | | Public Trans. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Magnet Schools** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Max. | | | - | 1.0 | | 1.5 | | .3 | .25 | + | | | - |
| 4-6 | Avg. | | - | - | .5 | | .4 | | .1 | - | - | | | - |
| | Max. | | - | - | 1.0 | | 1.5 | | .3 | .25 | + | | | - |
| 7-8 | Avg. | - | - | - | .5 | .2 | .4 | | | - | | | | - |
| | Max. | + | - | - | 2.0 | 1.1 | 1.5 | | | .5 | | | | - |
| 9-12 | Avg. | - | - | - | .5 | .2 | .4 | | | - | | | | - |
| | Max. | + | - | - | 2.0 | 1.1 | 1.5 | | | .5 | | | | - |
| **Paired/Allied Schools** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| K-3 | Avg. | | | | .5 | | | .1 | | .1 | - | 1.25 | .4 | .1 |
| | Max. | | | | 1.0 | | | .1 | | .3 | .25 | 1.25 | 1.5 | .2 |
| 4-6 | Avg. | | | | .5 | | | .1 | - | .1 | - | 1.25 | .4 | .1 |
| | Max. | | | | 1.0 | | | .1 | - | .3 | .25 | 1.25 | 1.5 | .2 |
| 7-8 | Avg. | | | | .5 | .2 | | .2 | - | | - | 1.5 | .4 | .1 |
| | Max. | | | | 2.0 | 1.1 | | .2 | - | | .5 | + | 1.5 | .4 |
| 9-12 | Avg. | | | | .5 | .2 | | .4 | - | | - | 1.5 | .4 | .1 |
| | Max. | | | | 2.0 | 1.1 | | .4 | - | | .5 | + | 1.5 | .4 |
| **School Utilization Optimization** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| K-3 | Avg. | | | - | .5 | | .2 | | | - | | - | | |
| | Max. | | | - | 1.0 | | .4 | | | - | | + | | |
| 4-6 | Avg. | | | - | .5 | | .2 | | | - | | - | | |
| | Max. | | | - | 1.0 | | .4 | | | - | | + | | |
| 7-8 | Avg. | | | - | .5 | - | .2 | | | | | - | | .1 |
| | Max. | | | - | 2.0 | - | .4 | | | | | + | | .4 |
| 9-12 | Avg. | | | - | .5 | - | .2 | | | | | - | | .1 |
| | Max. | | | - | 2.0 | - | .4 | | | | | + | | .4 |

*Vertical columns represent individual school districts
-No distance given
+No maximum

Eight of the ten districts stagger starting times. In the majority of cases there are different starting times for elementary and secondary schools, but some districts have separate starting times for magnet schools or provide different starting times based on other criteria.

Benefits. In considering the issue of express routing, it is important to consider both potential benefits and any problems which might accrue from its implementation. Open-ended as well as structured questions were utilized to obtain information about both of these areas. In general, the discussion on benefits will focus on various economies associated with centralized pickup, including greater efficiency in scheduling, better utilization of resources and decreased student riding time. Areas specifically addressed by the survey include the size and mix of the bus fleet, effects on staffing, organizational changes, and costs.

When asked about the key benefits of centralized pickup (Question F.2), respondents most commonly cited benefits involving the concept of efficiency and efficient running of routes on the one hand, and increased safety on the other. All ten respondents cited one or more aspects of efficiency. Six indicated that the routes were "simple," easier," "more direct," "shorter," "less confusing," or that "schools are able to tell new enrollees where they will be picked up and delivered without consulting [the] Routing Department." They are easier for both drivers and students, resulting in "better on-time scheduling" and "less chance to miss students" (2). Half (5) of the respondents mentioned that "riding time" or "student time on [the] bus decreased." Finally, better use of district resources was mentioned by three respondents, citing "more students per bus [and] reduced number of buses," "optimum utilization of equipment," and "reduction of cost per pupil."

Safety was the second most frequently mentioned benefit. Respondents (2) felt that express routing offered "shelter from inclement weather", "emergency assistance," or "safer stop locations," or that "larger groups waiting together [are] safer."

It is difficult to gauge the magnitude of these benefits. Only half the schools had had a different form of busing prior to their use of centralized pickup [see E.13]. Three had previously used neighborhood or corner pickup and one "door-to-door" for programs for which they now use centralized pickup (E.14). Two other difficulties in expressing impressions concerning the relative impact of express routing are that express routing typically is not used systemwide and thus does not affect the whole transportation program or budget, and that it often cannot be considered in isolation. Many of its potential benefits are offset or even increased by other changing circumstances.

In answer to the question (E.15) concerning the impact of centralized pickup on "the size and mix of buses in your fleet," three districts indicated reductions in the quantity of buses (some, 7 percent, and 25 percent, respectively) and one said there was no change. Regarding size of buses, three indicated increases (two of them by 15 percent, one citing examples of one 65-passenger bus replacing several carryalls and minibuses) and one said there was no change. One respondent mentioned that there were no changes because they already had "70+ passenger buses to begin with" and that reductions were mostly due to the impact of dual bell schedules, while another stated that reductions were offset "due to [an] increase of students in school utilization programs."

Regarding the staffing of the transportation department/system (E.16.a), two respondents indicated reductions in the number of drivers of 7 and 50 percent, respectively. All other indications for individual categories were for "no change." However, comments regarding these areas included statements that "special education and voluntary desegregation programs increased numbers of drivers, office and garage staff, offsetting any reductions caused by route optimization," that the "change reduced time expended [on] route transportation for those pupils by 90 percent," and that this was mostly a "contract operation, [hence] no change."

In connection with organizational changes, one respondent indicated substantial changes in job classes, reporting relationships, and supervision/management, and four indicated no changes in each of these areas. Comments by two respondents included statements that "major reorganizations in the Transportation Division changed reporting relationships, job classes, and overall supervision to rank-and-file ratio (lower)," and that express routing "reduced management of those particular routes by 90 percent."

Little useful data were obtained about effects on costs. One respondent indicated reductions and one indicated no change for operating costs and capital costs. However, comments by respondents indicate savings in at least three districts: "while campus-to-campus transportation reduced transportation costs in those related areas (Deseg[regation], Magnet and facilities), Special Education offset all savings disproportionately"; "drivers and equipment were used to relieve other areas"; "by reducing the number of buses and adjusting bus capacities when needed, we were able to maintain and avoid cost when additional students were added to the transportation program. We redirected equipment from one program to another"; and "better utilization of equipment and higher level of performance."

Similarly, little clear change is evident in certification and working hours of drivers. Two respondents indicated increased training/instruction certification and licensing time, one said these decreased, and two cited no change. For working hours, two respondents indicated decreased hours and three no change or offsetting factors ("where 20+ students congregated, then increased loading time, but general decrease; also increase if large number of sites").

Not surprisingly, all of the five that answered the question (F.19) regarding central pickup's effect on the time spent by students on buses, indicated a reduction in time spent on buses (e.g., "reduced," "more students on board for shorter time periods," and "shorter riding times; later pickup and delivery").

The effect on total time spent by students getting to and from school is far less clear. Respondents either reiterated comments about shorter riding times or indicated there was a tradeoff with increased walking, but were not specific about quantifying the trade off: "later pickup, earlier dropoff"; "reduced riding time: sometimes cabs were used to get to first stop"; "there was undoubtedly some time added by pupils having to get to their neighborhood school for pickup"; "some were required to walk further distances to the bus pickup locations but preferred shorter riding times"; and "shorter rides, but walk more."

All in all, it is fairly clear that there are economies associated with express routing. There are cost savings. Riding time is reduced. Routes are greatly simplified. The magnitude of these economies is less clear, however. Districts have not made clear cost comparisons. In general, cost savings have not been evident due to expansion of transportation services in other areas unrelated to express routing.

Problems. The two chief areas around which problems revolved are large numbers of students at pickup points and the increased distances involved in getting to the pickup points. Half (5) of the respondents mentioned problems at the pickup points. Three mentioned the "lack of supervision" or that "more staff (is) required to supervise" students. Three respondents also mentioned the related problems of "crowding at sites," of "residents at/near sites complaining of number gathered for pickup," or of "large number of students at one location." One mentioned the issue of "access [or the lack of it] to shelter [in school] during inclement weather and extreme cold."

An equal number (5) mentioned problems and complaints concerning the location of stops and the efforts required to reach them. These included "parents complaining about stop locations and distance," "some students have[ing] difficulty getting to their neighborhood school for transportation," the "increase in distance between student's residence and pickup location," and "complaints from parents" and from "walkers."

With the expectation (to some degree confirmed) that student supervision would be a greater concern with the larger numbers of students gathering at pickup points and riding individual buses, a significant portion of the questionnaire was devoted to questions regarding supervision. Unfortunately, this section was not as useful as it might have been because several respondents considered it the exception that they provide supervision; they did not then answer most of the later questions concerning that subject.

Of the ten districts responding, seven indicated that they did provide some sort of supervision on the bus (in addition to the driver) or at the pickup point. (Not all seven answered question E.2 with a 'yes': other answers indicated that supervision was sometimes provided.) However, five of these seven involved supervision of special education or handicapped students. Philadelphia provides supervision for other students on the bus for K-6 students and at the pickup points for K-9 students; Los Angeles provides supervision at some pickup points (schools) for all levels of students.

For supervision, both districts use paid employees. Philadelphia uses both members of the school staff and other staff persons for bus supervision and other staff persons at the pickup point. Los Angeles utilizes both school staff members and other staff at school campuses.

Both districts provide for telephone calls, emergency equipment, and shelter from inclement weather at their pickup points. One other district provides shelter from inclement weather.

Philadelphia provides supervision for 20 minutes before morning pickup and for 20 minutes after the afternoon drop (if there are five or more students and depending on the site), while Los Angeles provides supervision for five minutes both in the morning and in the afternoon at some school sites. Philadelphia provides supervisors if the ride is an hour or longer and/or if there are 40 or more students on the bus and/or for the desegregation program.

Seven of the ten districts indicated either frequent (2) or occasional (5) problems overall at the pickup points. Three indicated little or none. The breakdown of the seven districts' responses regarding specific problems is shown below in Table 6.

Table 6

Frequency of Problems at Pickup/Dropoff Sites

| Problem | A Great Deal | Frequently | Occasionally | Little or none |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Drug use and/or sale | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Fights | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| Smoking | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Harassment (resident vs. bused students) | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Graffiti/vandalism | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Response of neighborhood | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 |

By and large, there is not much difference among the frequencies of problems at pickup sites. Although smoking and harassment show up most "frequently," all the problems but drug use or sale are mentioned by the majority of districts as at least occasional problems. Five of the six problem types occurred at least occasionally in more than half the districts.

Although the problems are a common occurrence (see Problems above), no district indicated a lack of success in dealing with them. In looking at the responses to the problems, several districts were somewhat vague; "investigate, modify" or "concerns investigated and acted upon--mostly successful." It is unclear exactly who investigates.

Other districts were a bit more specific about who investigates or acts upon complaints, dispatching "district security" or sending an "unmarked police car and school supervisor" or having "attendance monitors respond to help at all times, like deputy." Responsibility to report or act upon complaints was also placed on bus drivers, who in one of the districts "have a citation system." In another district, "if names [of offenders are] known, principal treats as a disciplinary problem." Three districts mentioned changing the location of stops, one splitting stops, and one adding "another bus in area."

It should be noted, however, that the above findings do not include districts which abandoned express routing. One district cited discipline problems of children in large groups in its decision to discontinue express routing. Furthermore, this survey may not reflect the feelings of district staff (e.g., security, site administrators) who have to deal with the discipline problems directly.

Impact on Enrollments. Since San Diego's magnet and VEEP programs have been voluntary in nature, leaving it up to the students and their families to decide whether to participate, it is of key impotance that these programs not suffer from use of express routing. Of the five districts which previously had some sort of different busing scheme, four indicated no impact on enrollments in their racial desegregation or integration program. The one district that saw an impact (Philadelphia) indicated a 20 percent increase in K-3 and grade 4-6 enrollments. No specific mention of decreased enrollments was made by any respondent.

However, two districts (one in the source of screening, another on the short survey) indicated that they had dropped express routing due to "pressure to provide closer stops" and "parental complaints and charges of unequal service." This latter case has strong implications for our district. In this case, express routing had been implemented for students attending optional schools ("open" schools and more traditional, fundamental schools). In response to these complaints the "board attorney ruled that optional school students were entitled to [the] same level of service as other students." Should express routing be implemented in some form in our district, it is important that it be applied to magnet and VEEP students alike.

Conclusions/Recommendations

On the whole, the findings of this survey lean toward support of express bus routing. The exact magnitudes of benefits and problems associated with express routing remain unclear.

The questionnaire data present a picture of districts that have used express routing and found various benefits. These are benefits that are largely to be expected: cost savings and related more efficient use of transportation resources, simplified routing, and shorter bus rides. For the most part the survey did not provide specific cost savings data; apparently most districts have not carried out detailed, careful analyses, isolating other factors and exigencies. Thus, it is not clear just how great potential savings are.

On the other hand, as is to be expected, there are some problems (and, perhaps, advantages--greater safety in numbers) associated with managing large groups of students gathered together in one place. Most districts feel that these problems have not been extreme, that they are manageable without extensive supervision. (Note, however, that some of the districts which had dropped express routing had informally indicated supervision problems to us in the course of screening.) Moreover, not surprisingly, there have been complaints about increased walking distances in some districts. No districts, however, indicated any decreases in enrollment in desegregation programs due to the implementation of express routing.

All in all, the positive benefits seem to outweigh negative consequences. The concept of express routing merits further consideration by the Study Committee on Express Routing Transportation Services. The experiences of integration program personnel and of staff in other districts who deal directly with discipline problems could also be weighed profitably.

The committee might consider recommending pilot use of express routing, including several schools where magnet and VEEP programs are well established. This would allow more precise determination of relative benefits to be derived from such transportation service and would involve a cross section of the district's population.

This report prepared by Peter D. Bell

PDB:jd

# EXPRESS ROUTING SURVEY
# PREQUALIFICATION QUESTIONS

| | | Qualified |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Does your district operate a desegregation/integration program? | Yes |
| | | or |
| | Do you transport students because of enrollments that exceed the capacities of facilities at some schools? | Yes |
| 2. | How many students do you transport daily? | ≥ 10,000 |
| 3. | What is the size of your bus fleet? (Owned and contract carrier combined) | ≥ 200 |
| 4. | Do you now employ, or have you ever experimented with, transportation service that does not pickup students in their neighborhoods, but instead requires students to walk to school campuses or other central locations and collect in large groups for pickup and delivery? | Yes |
| 5. | If yes to #4, would you be willing to respond to a telephone survey later this summer? | |
| | a. Written survey questions will be mailed in advance. | |
| | b. Appointment for specific time of telephone interview will be made. | |
| | c. Encourage conference calling with staff of programs and transportation together. | |

RDS:t
R 0625.2C

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division

EXPRESS ROUTING SURVEY
PREQUALIFICATION QUESTIONS

Qualified

Who we should be talking to:

Contact_____ Title _____

Telephone Number _____ District _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

1. Does your district bus students to and from school? Yes/No

2. Do you now employ, or have you ever experimented with, transportation service that does not pickup students in their neighborhoods, but instead requires students to walk to school campuses or other central locations and collect in large groups for pickup and delivery (express routing)? Yes/No

   If not, did you ever formally consider using such a system? Yes/No

3. Does your district operate a desegregation/integration program? Yes/No

   If so, is it a voluntary program or "forced busing"? _____

7. If yes to second half of 2, would you be willing to respond to a brief questionnaire regarding why you did not decide to adopt express routing?

7/25/86
PG:LS:mh
REF: Z EXPRTG

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

**PLANNING, RESEARCH, & EVALUATION DIVISION**
EDUCATION CENTER
4100 Normal St, San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 293-8500

Thank you for participating in our survey of school districts that have made use of "express routing" bus service. Our district is exploring the possibility of using express routing for our integration program and for reducing the overenrollment of some of our schools. We are very eager to learn about your experiences.

Enclosed is an extensive questionnaire concerning your district and its transportation program. Because it is extensive, we want to make it as easy as possible for you to provide the desired information. We will be calling you in a couple of days to clarify any questions you may have about the questionnaire. To fully realize the value of that call, we hope that you can give this questionnaire early attention. We will also be setting up a time then to call again to begin taking information over the phone. We believe much of the information can be collected by pencil and paper, but, if due to limitations of time you would find it more convenient to give answers over the phone, we would be glad to accommodate your needs.

You will also find a brief set of definitions to clarify our use of several key terms.

Thank you again. We will be contacting you soon. Should you have any questions in the meantime, contact me at (619) 293-8629 or Linda Sturak at (619) 293-8119.

Sincerely,

Peter D. Bell
Educational Researcher

PDB:mh

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

**Residential Service:** School transportation service that picks up and drops off students in their residential neighborhoods (at or near their residences).

**Express Routing:** School Transportation service that (in contrast to residential service) requires students to gather at central pickup points (e.g., a local school site or a point on a major transportation artery) for morning pickup, and drops them off at the same place after school; also referred to as centralized pickup or campus-to-campus transportation.

**Magnet School Program:** An integration/desegragation program which features schools that offer a specialized program or emphasis different from other schools, attracting non-resident students to attend and thereby achieving improved ethnic/racial balance of school enrollments.

**Allied/Paired Schools Program:** An integration/desegregation program which encourages students to enroll at schools that are allied/paired with their schools of residence to improve the racial/ethnic balance of school enrollments; unlike a magnet school program, no particular educational program is involved.

**School Facilities Utilization Optimization:** A program of transporting students to attend schools other than their schools of residence to attain a better use of school facilities (e.g., to combat local under- and overenrollment), rather than for integration or desegregation purposes.

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

SURVEY OF SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION
EXPRESS ROUTING COMMITTEE

A. IDENTIFICATION:

1. School District Name _____

2. Address _____

State/County _____

3. Type of District

____ Elementary ____ Unified K-12

____ Secondary ____ Other

4. Person Responding _____

5. Title of Person Responding _____

6. Telephone No. (___) _____

---

B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Number of students enrolled in the district _____

2. Geographic size (square miles) _____

3. Number of School Sites _____

4. Transportation Budget (annual) Operating $_____
Capital $_____

TOTAL $_____

What percentage of the total district budget does the transportation budget represent? _____

5. Are routes developed and scheduled by your district by computer or manual methods? (Check one.)

a. Computer-generated _____
b. Computer-assisted _____
c. Hand-written _____

B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION: (continued)

6. Transportation Programs/Services

Please provide the data in response to each blank space in the matrix below. Also, indicate if there was significant overlap (e.g., students transported) for both desegregation and over-enrollment purposes).

| PROGRAM | I. Number School Sites Receiving Students | II. Total Number of Students Transported Daily (Round Trip) | III. Total Number of Buses |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) Racial Desegregation/ Integration | | | |
| b) Over-Enrolled Schools/ Redistribution of students between schools for purposes other than desegregation/ integration purposes | | | |
| c) Regular Home to School/ Distance & Hazard (Students attending their geographic resident school) | | | |
| d) Special Education/ Handicapped (P.L. 94-142) | | | |
| e) Parochial/Private Schools mandated by state/district | | | |
| f) Vocational Education/ Remedial Programs/ Other Special Purpose Programs | | | |
| g) Other (describe) _____ _____ _____ | | | |

Comments:

7. What is the ownership and mix of sizes in bus fleet(s) providing transportation services to your district? Please provide the data in response to each blank space in the matrix below:

DISTRIBUTION OF BUS OWNERSHIP

| I. Bus Size | II. District | III. Private Company | IV. Public Transit |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. 90+ passengers | | | |
| b. 77-89 " | | | |
| c. 65-76 " | | | |
| d. 47-64 " | | | |
| e. 32-46 " | | | |
| f. 21-31 " | | | |
| g. 20 & under | | | |

8. How many bus firms are employed by the district to provide services? (Answer only if buses identified in Question 7, Column III.)

9. Bus Driver Data

a. What is collective bargaining status of bus drivers? (Check one.)

| | Union | Non-Union |
|---|---|---|
| District | | |
| Private | | |
| Public Transit | | |

b. What is the employment status of bus drivers in your system? (Please check all that apply.)

1) Permanent/Monthly _____
   Temporary/Hourly _____
2) Full-time (8 hrs.) _____
   Part-time _____
3) Minimum Hour Guarantee

   Yes_____ (specify hours:_____)
   No _____

c. How are drivers assigned to routes/runs?

1) Post and bid process _____
2) Management determines _____
3) Other (specify)_____

d. Are all bus drivers licensed to drive all sizes and configurations of buses in the respective fleet?

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| District | _____ | _____ |
| Private | _____ | _____ |
| Public Transit | _____ | _____ |

---

C. FEATURES OF RACIAL DESEGREGATION/INTEGRATION AND SCHOOL FACILITIES UTILIZATION OPTIMIZING PROGRAMS:

1. Does the district operate magnet school programs?

YES _____ NO _____

If NO, skip to question #2. If YES, respond to questions below:

a. Is this program

_____ court-mandated
_____ voluntary
_____ other (Please specify.)_____

b. When was this program implemented? _____

c. Participation by students (Check one.)

____ Participation is voluntary
____ Participation is mandatory

d. Determination of magnet school student will attend (Check one.)

____ Student selects school of choice
____ Student is enrolled/assigned by district per a policy or other criteria

e. Enrollment criteria for student into magnet school (Check all applicable.)

____ Open enrollment. Student may apply to any school in district without restrictions.
____ Enrollment is restricted by geographic location of student's residence or school of residence.
____ Enrollment is restricted by ethnicity.
____ Enrollment is restricted by competitive exam, grade point average, or other performance criteria.
____Other _____

_____

_____

2. Does the district offer an integration program (excluding magnet schools) which enrolls students in another school or schools paired/allied with the school of residence for purposes of improving racial balance of the schools?

YES_____ NO_____

If NO, skip to question #3. If YES, respond to questions below:

a. Is this program

_____ court-mandated
_____ voluntary
_____ other (Please specify.)_____

b. When was this program implemented? _____

c. Participation by students is (Check one.)

____voluntary
____mandatory

d. Determination of paired/allied school student will attend (Check one.)

____ Student selects school of choice
____ Student is enrolled/assigned by district per a policy or other criteria

e. Enrollment criteria for students into paired/allied school (Check all applicable.)

____ Enrollment is restricted by grade level between schools in the cluster, pair, or allied
____ Enrollment is restricted by ethnicity
____ Enrollment is restricted by competitive exam, grade point average, or other performance criteria
____ Other _____

_____

3. Does the district transport students to attend schools other than their school of residence primarily to achieve better utilization of school facilities rather than as a desegregation/integration measure?

YES_____ NO_____

If NO, skip to question #4. If YES, respond to questions below:

a. Is this program

_____ court-mandated
_____ voluntary
_____ other (Please specify.)_____

b. When was this program implemented? _____

c. Participation by students is (Check one.)

____voluntary
____mandatory

d. Determination of school student will attend (Check one.)

____ student selects school of choice
____ student is enrolled/assigned by district per a policy or other criteria

c. Enrollment criteria for students into school of attendance

_____Enrollment is restricted to certain grade levels
_____Enrollment is restricted by competitive exams, grade point average or other performance criteria
_____Other

---

D. TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PARAMETERS

1. What level of service is provided to students in the racial desegregation/integration and school utilization programs identified in Section 1.c.? Indicate location of bus stops/pickup points in summary below by check ma

a. MAGNET SCHOOLS (Reference Question C.1.)

| Location of Bus Stops/Pickup Points | Student Grade Level K-3 | 4-6 | 7-8 | 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| o At home residence (doorstop). | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o In neighborhood on residential streets. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Restricted to major streets, business and arterial streets. May be outside neighborhood of student residence. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Restricted to school campuses. Student must walk to neighborhood or other assigned school site for pickup. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Other _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

b. PAIRED, ALLIED SCHOOLS (Reference Question C.2.)

| Location of Bus Stops/Pickup Points | Student Grade Level K-3 | 4-6 | 7-8 | 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| o At home residence (doorstop). | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o In neighborhood on residential streets. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Restricted to major streets, business and arterial streets. May be outside neighborhood of student residence. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Restricted to school campuses. Student must walk to neighborhood or other assigned school site for pickup. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Other_____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

c. SCHOOL FACILITIES UTILIZATION (Reference Question C.3.)

| Location of Bus Stops/Pickup Points | Student Grade Level K-3 | 4-6 | 7-8 | 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| o At home residence (doorstop). | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o In neighborhood on residential streets. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Restricted to major streets, business and arterial streets. May be outside neighborhood of student residence. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Restricted to school campuses. Student must walk to neighborhood or other assigned school site for pickup. | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| o Other _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

2. What are the riding times that students travel one direction on the bus? (Specify in minutes.)

| Grade Level | | Magnet Schools | Paired/Allied Schools | School Facilities Utilization |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| K-3 | AVG: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | MAX: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4-6 | AVG: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | MAX: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7-8 | AVG: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | MAX: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9-12 | AVG: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | MAX: | _____ | _____ | _____ |

3. What distances may students be required to walk to their assigned bus stops/pickup locations? (Specify in fractions of a mile.)

| Grade Level | | Magnet Schools | Paired/Allied Schools | School Facilities Utilization |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| K-3 | AVG: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | MAX: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4-6 | AVG: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | MAX: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7-8 | AVG: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | MAX: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9-12 | AVG: | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | MAX: | _____ | _____ | _____ |

4. Are hazards identified by the district that may impact the bus stop assignment and/or walking distances in exception to the answers identified in questions D.1-3 above? YES_____ NO_____

If NO, skip to Section E.

If YES, check off all appropriate items below:

a. Traffic hazards to pedestrians _____
b. Geographic, topographic hazards _____
c. Weather hazards (inclement weather, temperature, etc.) _____
d. Social, crime hazards _____
e. Other (specify)_____

_____

5. In hazardous areas, are special crossing guards provided for access of students to their bus stops/pickup points?

YES_____ NO_____

6. Are provisions made for children to be picked up or dropped off at locations other than their school site?

YES_____ NO_____

---

E. IMPACT OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES RESTRICTED TO SCHOOL SITE PICKUPS/DELIVERY. (Answer questions in this section only if such service is identified in Section D.)

1. How many students collect at a school campus or other central pickup point?

Maximum number____ Minimum number____ Average number____

2. Does the district provide adult supervision of students on the bus (in addition to the driver) or at the pickup point?

YES____ NO____

If NO, skip to Question #7. If YES, check off appropriate spaces below:

| | GRADE LEVEL | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | K-3 | 4-6 | 7-8 | 9-12 |
| a. On the bus in addition to the driver | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| b. At the pickup point/school campus | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

3. What type of adult supervision is provided? (Check appropriate spaces.)

a. On the bus in addition to the driver:

(1) Paid employee

member of school staff ____
other staff person ____

(2) Volunteer

parent, sibling/relative ____
community member ____

b. At the pickup point/school campus:

(1) Paid employee

member of school staff ____
other staff person ____

(2) Volunteer

parent, sibling/relative ____
community member ____

(3) Who supervises the employee/volunteer (reports to whom?)

| | Employee | Volunteer |
|---|---|---|
| principal (sending site) | ____ | ____ |
| principal (receiving site) | ____ | ____ |
| program manager | ____ | ____ |
| transportation manager | ____ | ____ |
| security manager | ____ | ____ |
| other (specify) | ____ | ____ |
| _____ | | |

4. At the pickup point/school campus, are provisions made for:

telephone calls _____
emergency equipment _____
shelter from inclement weather _____

5. Are there certain conditions which have to occur before adult supervision is provided?

YES_____ NO_____

If NO, skip to Question #6.

If YES, check appropriate spaces:

On the bus:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Depending on length of bus ride | _____ | How Long | _____ |
| Depending on number of passengers | _____ | What Number | _____ |
| Depending on program/objective | _____ | What | _____ |

Other (specify) _____

_____

At the central pickup point/campus:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Depending on number of students | _____ | Quantity | _____ |
| Depending on location of stop | _____ | Location | _____ |

Other (specify) _____

_____

6. How long is adult supervision provided?

| | In Minutes |
|---|---|
| Before morning pickup | _____ |
| After afternoon delivery drop | _____ |

7. To what degree has your district experienced problems at central pickup points/campuses while students either waited for the bus pickup or after drop/off delivery in the afternoon? (Check one.)

A great deal _____
Frequently _____
Occasionally _____
Little or none_____

If Little or none skip to Question 9.

Otherwise: To what degree has your district experienced each of the following problems while students waited for pickup in the morning or after dropoff/delivery in the afternoon? (Check one for each problem.)

| | A Great Deal | Frequently | Occasionally | Little or none |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Drug use and/or sale | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| b. Fights | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| c. Smoking | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| d. Harrassment (resident vs. bussed students) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| e. Graffiti and/or vandalism | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| f. Response of neighborhood | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| g. Other (specify) _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

8. Describe how you responded to problems. Were these responses successful?

_____

_____

9. What provision is made for early-dismissal school days which could cause students to be dropped off at sites while school is in session?

_____

_____

_____

10. What provision is made for after-school/extra curricular activities?

_____

_____

_____

11. Do you have staggered starting times for schools to accommodate this transportation system or to make more efficient use of buses and drivers. (Describe.)

_____

_____

_____

12. Have special parking/loading zones been designated for buses providing service at central pickup points/school campuses?

YES_____ NO_____

Is parking/loading done in the street or on the school campus?

_____ campus grounds

_____ street

_____ other (specify)

13. Prior to your current use of centralized pickup/campus-to-campus transportation (express routing), did you use a different form of busing (e.g., neighborhood or home pickup and delivery)?

YES_____ NO_____

If NO, skip to F.2.

If YES, continue.

14. What form of busing did you use in the past? Did you use that for all programs mentioned in C.1.-C.3. now using centralized pickup?

_____

_____

15. How did implementation of centralized pickup/campus-to-campus transportation impact the size and mix of buses in your fleet(s)? (Estimate percentage changes.)

| | Reduced | Increased | No Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. Quantity of buses | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| b. Size of buses | _____% | _____% | _____ |

c. Comments _____

_____

_____

16. How did implementation of centralized pickup/campus-to-campus transportation impact the organization and staffing of your transportation department/system? (Estimate percentages of change.)

a. Staffing:

| | Reduced | Increased | No Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of drivers | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| Number of office staff | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| Number of garage staff | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| Number of school site staff | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| Number of other staff (specify) _____ | _____% | _____% | _____ |

Comments _____

_____

_____

b. Organization:

| | Substantial Change | Moderate Change | No Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Job classes | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Reporting Relationships | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Supervision/Management | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Comments _____

_____

_____

17. How did implementation of centralized pickup/school campus-to-campus transportation impact the transportation budget? (Check all appropriate spaces.) Provide percentages of change.

| | Reduced | Increased | No Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. Operating costs | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| b. Capital costs | _____% | _____% | _____ |

c. Comments _____

_____

_____

18. How did implementation of centralized pickup/campus-to-campus transportation impact the certification and working hours of bus drivers? (Check all appropriate items)

a. Training/Instruction Certification and Licensing Time:

_____ Increased

_____ Decreased

_____ Other (specify) _____

b. Working Hours of Bus Drivers:

_____ Increased

_____ Decreased

_____ Other (specify) _____

19. How did it affect time spent by students on buses?

_____

_____

_____

20. How did it affect total time spent by students getting to and from school?

_____

_____

_____

F. EVALUATION OF CENTRALIZED PICKUP/SCHOOL SITE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES:

1. Did centralized pickups/campus-to-campus transportation impact enrollments in your racial desegregation/integration program?

YES_____ NO_____

If NO, skip to question 2. If YES or UNKNOWN, estimate impact in percentages of enrollment:

| Grade Levels | Increase | Decrease | Other |
|---|---|---|---|
| K-3 | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| 4-6 | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| 7-8 | _____% | _____% | _____ |
| 9-12 | _____% | _____% | _____ |

2. What are the key benefits of centralized pickup/campus-to-campus busing?

_____

_____

_____

3. What are the major problems with centralized pickup/campus-to-campus busing?

_____

_____

_____

4. Do you plan to modify your transportation system next year or in the near future?
YES_____ NO_____

If yes, how are you going to change it?_____

_____

_____

_____

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

PLANNING, RESEARCH, & EVALUATION DIVISION
EDUCATION CENTER
4100 Normal St. San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 293-8500

Thank you for responding to our telephone request some weeks back regarding transportation services you provide your district's students.

Our district is conducting an extensive survey of districts currently using express routing (i.e, centralized pick up or campus-to-campus transportation). We are also interested in learning about districts which have either used express routing in the past, considered and rejected its use, or plan to institute it soon.

Enclosed you will find a very brief questionnaire concerning your district. We will call you in a few days to clarify any questions you may have about the questionnaire. If you find it more convenient to give answers over the phone, we will be glad to accommodate your needs.

You will also find a brief set of definitions to clarify our use of several key terms.

Thank you again. We will be contacting you soon. Should you have any questions in the meantime, contact me at (619) 293-8629 or Linda Sturak at (619) 293-8119.

Sincerely,

Peter D. Bell
Educational Researcher

Enclosures
PDB:mh

REF: Z EXPMEMO1

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

**Residential Service:** School transportation service that picks up and drops off students in their residential neighborhoods (at or near their residences).

**Express Routing:** School Transportation service that (in contrast to residential service) requires students to gather at central pickup points (e.g., a local school site or a point on a major transportation artery) for morning pickup, and drops them off at the same place after school; also referred to as centralized pickup or campus-to-campus transportation.

**Magnet School Program:** An integration/desegragation program which features schools that offer a specialized program or emphasis different from other schools, attracting non-resident students to attend and thereby achieving improved ethnic/racial balance of school enrollments.

**Allied/Paired Schools Program:** An integration/desegregation program which encourages students to enroll at schools that are allied/paired with their schools of residence to improve the racial/ethnic balance of school enrollments; unlike a magnet school program, no particular educational program is involved.

**School Facilities Utilization Optimization:** A program of transporting students to attend schools other than their schools of residence to attain a better use of school facilities (e.g., to combat local under- and overenrollment), rather than for integration or desegregation purposes.

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

ABBREVIATED SURVEY OF SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION

A. IDENTIFICATION:

1. School District Name _____

2. Address _____

State/County _____

3. Type of District

____ Elementary ____ Unified K-12

____ Secondary ____ Other

4. Person Responding _____

5. Title of Person Responding _____

6. Telephone No. (____) _____

---

B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Number of students enrolled in the district _____

2. Geographic size (square miles) _____

3. Number of School Sites _____

4. Transportation Budget (annual) Operating $_____
Capital $_____

TOTAL $_____

What percentage of the total district budget does the transportation budget represent? _____

5. Are routes developed and scheduled by your district by computer or manual methods? (Check one.)

a. Computer-generated _____
b. Computer-assisted _____
c. Hand-written _____

B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION: (continued)

6. Transportation Programs/Services

Please provide the data in response to each blank space in the matrix below. Also, indicate if there was significant overlap (e.g., students transported) for both desegregation and over-enrollment purposes).

| PROGRAM | I. Number School Sites Receiving Students | II. Total Number of Students Transported Daily (Round Trip) | III. Total Number of Buses |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) Racial Desegregation/ Integration | | | |
| b) Over-Enrolled Schools/ Redistribution of students between schools for purposes other than desegregation/ integration purposes | | | |
| c) Regular Home to School/ Distance & Hazard (Students attending their geographic resident school) | | | |
| d) Special Education/ Handicapped (P.L. 94-142) | | | |
| e) Parochial/Private Schools mandated by state/district | | | |
| f) Vocational Education/ Remedial Programs/ Other Special Purpose Programs | | | |
| g) Other (describe) _____ _____ _____ | | | |

Comments:

C. Express Routing

Please answer the questions indicated for your district below. Since most of the questions require lengthier answers, please use additional paper if necessary. Or, if you prefer, you can provide answers over the phone.

Your district has indicated that it:

[ ] used express routing in the past but is no longer using it now.
**Please answer all the questions (1-8).**

[ ] has formally considered and rejected the use of express routing.
**Please answer question 8.**

[ ] has considered express routing and plans to begin use of express routing.
**Please answer questions 1 and 8.**

1. What form of express routing did/will you use (e.g., Where were children picked up? How many children participated in the express routing daily? Did they belong to any particular programs?)?

2. For how many years did you use express routing (for other than summer programs)?

3. Why did you decide not to continue to use express routing?

4. Did you experience any cost savings using express routing? How much? If not, why not?

5. What advantages did you experience, if any (e.g., ease of scheduling/routing; cost savings; etc.)?

6. What disadvantages or problems did you experience, if any (e.g., parental dissatisfaction; behavioral problems with groups of students at pickup points; etc.)?

7. What effects did express routing have on the students who were transported (e.g., it took them longer/less time to get to school; they liked/did not like it; etc.)?

8. When you initially considered express routing, what were the major factors in your decision to use/not use it?

| CITY | SCHOOL DISTRICT |
|---|---|
| ALBUQUERQUE, NM | Albuquerque Public Schools |
| ANOKA, MN | Anoka, Mn. |
| ATLANTA, GA | Gwinnet County Public Schools |
| AUSTIN, TX | Austin Independent School District |
| BATON ROUGE, LA | East Baton Rouge Public School District |
| BIRMINGHAM, AL | Birmingham Public Schools |
| BOSTON, MA | Boston Public School District |
| BUFFALO, NY | Buffalo Board of Education |
| CHICAGO, ILL | Chicago Public Schools |
| CHARLOTTE, NC | Charlotte-Mecklenburg Consolidated School Dist. |
| CINCINNATI, OH | Cincinnati Public Schools |
| CLEVELAND, OH | Cleveland City Schools |
| DALLAS, TX | Dallas County Schools |
| DENVER, CO | Denver Public Schools |
| DES MOINES, IA | Des Moines Public School District |
| FORT WORTH, TX | Fort Worth Public Schools |
| HONOLULU, HI | Hawaii State Schools |
| HOUSTON, TX. | Houston Independent School District |
| JEFFERSON COUNTY, CO | Jefferson County Public Schools |
| KANSAS CITY, MO | Kansas City Public Schools |
| LAS VEGAS, NV | Clark County School Disrict |
| LITTLE ROCK, AK | Plaskey County Public Schools |
| LONG BEACH, CA | Long Beach Unified School District |
| LOS ANGELES, CA | Los Angeles Unified School District |
| LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CA | Los Angeles County Supt. of Schools |
| LOUISVILLE, KY | Jefferson County Public Schools |
| MIAMI, FL | Dade County Unified School District |
| MILWAUKEE, WI | Milwaukee Public Schools |
| MINNEAPOLIS, MN | Minneapolis Public Schools |
| NASHVILLE, TN | Nashville-Davidson County Metropolitan Public Schools |
| NEW ORLEANS, LA | New Orleans Public Schools |
| NORFOLK, VA | Norfolk Public Schools |
| OKLAHOMA CITY, OK | Oklahoma City Public Schools |
| OMAHA, NB | Omaha Public School District |
| PHILADELPHIA, PA | Philadelphia School District |
| PITTSBURG, PA | Pittsburgh Public Schools |
| PORTLAND, OR | Portland Public Schools |
| RALEIGH, NC | Wade County Public Schools |
| RICHMOND, VA | Richmond City Public Schools |
| SACRAMENTO, CA | San Juan Unified School District |
| ST. PAUL, MN | St. Paul Public Schools |
| SAN FRANCISCO, CA | San Francisco Unified School District |
| SEATTLE, WA | Seattle Public Schools |
| SHREVEPORT, LA | Cato Parish School Board |
| WASHINGTON, DC | Office of Public Transportation |
| WICHITA, KA | Wichita Public Schools |

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division

Research Department

# EXPRESS ROUTING SURVEY

Bulleted (•) districts responded to the survey.

The following have been sent a full survey and are currently using express routing:

| SCHOOL DISTRICT | CITY |
|---|---|
| Albuquerque Public Schools | Albuquerque |
| • East Baton Rouge Public School District | Baton Rouge |
| Boston Public School District | Boston |
| Chicago Public Schools | Chicago |
| • Dallas County Schools | Dallas |
| Des Moines Public School District | Des Moines |
| • Long Beach Unified School Distict | Long Beach |
| • Los Angeles Unified School District | Los Angeles |
| • Jefferson County Public Schools | Louisville |
| • Milwaukee Public Schools | Milwaukee |
| • Nashville-Davidson County Metropolitan Public Schools | Nashville |
| • Norfolk Public Schools | Norfolk |
| • Philadelphia School District | Philadelphia |
| Pittsburgh Public Schools | Pittsburgh |
| • Wichita Public Schools | Wichita |

The following have been sent the abbreviated version of the survey

Districts that have used express routing in the past:

| | |
|---|---|
| • Charlotte-Mecklenburg Consolidated School District | Charlotte |
| Cincinnati Public Schools | Cincinnati |
| Wade County Public Schools | Raleigh |
| Seattle Public Schools | Seattle |

Districts that have considered express routing:

| | |
|---|---|
| Austin Independent School District | Austin |
| • St. Paul Public Schools | St. Paul |

Districts that will be implementing express routing:

| | |
|---|---|
| Dade County Unified School District | Miami |

11/7/86

PB:mh

REF: Z EXPRTG3,4

PART II

LIST OF TABLES

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2. Global Levels of Satisfaction, Transportation and Integration Officials..... 4

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SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division
Research Department

# EXPRESS ROUTING TRANSPORTATION SURVEY
# (Part II)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Issue/Concern

The district is exploring the use of express routing for its voluntary integration program in order to reduce the costs of transporting students. Express routing is a form of bus transportation which picks up and drops off students at centralized points (school sites and major traffic arteries) instead of providing students residential or neighborhood service.

A previous study examined similar districts' experiences in applying express routing to integration and other school programs. This study acts on the recommendations of the earlier study. It recontacts transportation officials in these districts and in other districts which had dropped express routing to obtain further information. It surveys integration program officials and site administrators in all these districts to gain additional perspectives on express routing.

### Recommendations

The findings of this survey lend additional support to express routing. If district estimates show substantial savings opportunities under express routing, the district should implement a pilot program of express routing within the integration program. This pilot should include several schools where magnet and VEEP programs are well established. Implementation should include:

- extensive communication with parents about the new express routing program, including the advantages of safety, security, and supervision associated with express routing, as well as the need for fiscal responsibility;
- involvement of parents in its implementation and improvement;
- general responsiveness to parents' suggestions within the limits of express routing; and
- provision of funds for additional supervision at busier collection points.

On the basis of experience with this pilot program, the district should at a later time consider districtwide extension of express routing.

Rationale

Express routing has provided significant savings in other districts similar to San Diego and has generally offered improved reliability of service and more efficient use of resources. Although most schools surveyed had begun their participation in integration programs with express routing (not switching from neighborhood pickup), data from other schools and from district officials show that little if any decrease in participation in desegregation programs can be attributed to express routing. The present study indicates considerable satisfaction with express routing at all administrative levels, including school sites. Safety, security, and supervision emerge as equally important advantages of express routing in the thinking of site administrators and parents.

There are some disadvantages associated with express routing. In total, they do not outweigh the benefits and many are not unique to express routing. The experience of other districts shows that these disadvantages and some initially negative parental reaction can be minimized with proper preparation and implementation. This includes supervision of students at collection points by existing staff, augmented where necessary by volunteer and/or paid monitors; emphasis on the merits of increased safety and security; extensive communication with parents about the new program, involvement of parents in its implementation and improvement; and general responsiveness to parents' suggestions.

Budget Implications

Adoption of express routing should reduce transportation costs significantly.

PDG:mh

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division
Research Department

# EXPRESS ROUTING TRANSPORTATION SURVEY
(Part II)

## Issue/Concern

Currently, the district employs a form of residential bus service to transport students participating in the district's voluntary integration program to and from their schools. This school transportation service, which picks up and drops off students in their residential neighborhoods--typically at neighborhood bus stops--has been cited in the past as an "expensive" approach.

The district is considering implementing a form of express routing, which consolidates neighborhood bus stops into centralized pickup/dropoff points at local school sites or on major transportation arteries. Express routing would make more efficient use of the district's limited financial resources.

This report to the Study Committee on Express Routing Transportation Services reviews the opinions and experiences of transportation officials, integration program officials, and site administrators in connection with applications of express routing in their respective school districts' integration programs and in efforts to relieve overcrowding of school facilities.

## Background

In November 1986, a report of the results of a previous survey on express routing was presented to the study committee and cabinet. The study committee acted on the recommendations of the report and asked that a second study be conducted based on additional information from integration officials and site administrators in districts using express routing. This would broaden the range of perspectives available concerning the implementation of express routing. In particular, it would offer insight from individuals who personally had to deal with problems stemming from express routing. The second study was also to obtain further detail about the savings associated with express routing and the experience of districts who had abandoned the program.

Several members of the study committee and of the Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division (PRE) developed a set of issues to be covered in new questionnaires. PRE staff members wrote questions to address these issues, ultimately developing three separate but overlapping questionnaires for transportation officials, integration program officials, and site administrators, respectively. These questionnaires underwent minor revision by Business Services Division staff.

PRE proposed to administer the questionnaires (see Appendix A) over the telephone to representatives of seven school districts: five districts who from the results of the first study had shifted from previous residential or neighborhood pickup to current use of express routing, and two districts who had abandoned express routing for reasons apparently related to express routing itself. Within each district the same transportation official responding in the screening or questionnaire stages of the first survey was to be asked additional questions, including the name of an appropriate integration program official.

The integration offical was asked a series of questions and requested to include two sets of three site administrators to survey: preferably one elementary, one middle/junior high, and one senior high school administrator in each set. The two sets were to differ in that one would include administrators at schools with relatively few problems with express routing, while the other would include schools where more difficulties were encountered.

The site administrators were then called and asked still another set of questions.

The three questionnaires were to obtain various data, including:

- o a global evaluation of satisfaction with express routing;
- o judgments of advantages and disadvantages;
- o parent and community reactions to express routing;
- o methods of working with the community to increase understanding;
- o information regarding supervision of students;
- o discussions of various problems or difficulties;
- o various effects of express routing on students, particularly changes in walking distances and riding times, and having to wait or walk in the dark;
- o actual savings from express routing;
- o handling children of varying ages; and
- o data on possible formal evaluations of express routing.

This report summarizes the findings of the survey, including:

- o a brief discussion of the districts and individuals responding;
- o an analysis of the global evaluations of the various kinds of respondents;
- o an examination of the advantages and disadvantages of express routing;
- o a summary of methods of supervision;
- o a discussion of methods of working with the community;
- o a second look at potential cost savings; and
- o a consideration of other varied concerns.

Because the earlier report dealt extensively with transportation officials, this report will focus mainly on site administrators and integration program officials.

Copies of the survey questions for transportation officials, integration program officials, and site administrators may be found in the Appendix.

## Discussion/Findings

Respondents. Originally it was intended that seven districts be surveyed for this second set of questions. However, of the five districts from the first survey that seemed to employ a form of express routing and to have previously used residential or neighborhood pickup, two--Louisville and Wichita--seemed to fall outside the realm of comparability to our own district. Louisville (or Jefferson County) includes a diversity of urban, suburban and rural areas in its busing scheme. Over half of the children are transported. Virtually all students in the rural and suburban areas are picked up near their homes and bused to a nearby school. Those in the integration program are then transferred to another bus to ride to their schools of attendance. In the city, more students walk to their schools and are then transferred. However, relatively few students actually participate in what we consider express routing. Indeed, Louisville's term--depoting--is more expressive of their system. The information from the transportation and integration officials in Louisville was useful and was included in this report. The information obtained from site administrators was less applicable and was not included.

Wichita uses express routing only in its summer school program (as does Seattle). This involves a relatively small number of students and is not strictly comparable to potential uses in our own district. No data from Wichita were included.

Of the five districts remaining, three--Long Beach, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia--offered full sets of surveys from all three types of officials. The current transportation program official interviewed in Los Angeles was the integration official at time of implementation, hence no separate interview was conducted for the transportation survey.

Table 1

Breakdown of Respondents by
District and Survey Types

| District | Transportation | Integration | Site |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cincinnati | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Long Beach | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Los Angeles | 0 | 1 | 6 |
| Louisville | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Philadelphia | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Seattle | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 21 |

The two districts abandoning express routing were Seattle and Cincinnati. Seattle's integration official was not in office at the time of the express routing usage and thus was not surveyed. Only three Seattle school sites were involved in the express routing program. Two of the three principals at those schools were surveyed; the third had retired. Cincinnati's transportation and integration program officials were surveyed, but it was only possible to identify and survey one principal involved with express routing.

Altogether five transportation official surveys, five integration official surveys, and 21 site administrator surveys were conducted (see Table 1). The two districts abandoning express routing are somewhat underrepresented, but their respondents' opinions and experience do not differ significantly from those with active programs.

Satisfaction. On the whole, satisfaction with express routing was relatively high across the board. Transportation and integration officials were more satisfied than site administrators. Some of the difference in satisfaction is not surprising. Transportation departments, for example, would be expected to derive the most benefits (savings and simplification), while sites would have to deal with responsibilities of supervision. On a 1-5 satisfaction scale, with 5 high, 1 low, and 3 "neutral," transportation and integration officials each averaged 4.40. Site administrators averaged 3.40, still indicating greater satisfaction than dissatisfaction. See Tables 2 and 3 for greater detail.

Table 2

Global Levels of Satisfaction,
Transportation and Integration Officials

| | Officials | |
|---|---|---|
| District | Transportation | Integration |
| Cincinnati | 5 | 4 |
| Long Beach | 5 | 5 |
| Louisville | 4 | 5 |
| Los Angeles | - | 5 |
| Philadelphia | 5 | 3 |
| Seattle | 3 | - |
| Average | 4.40 | 4.40 |

Table 3

Global Levels of Satisfaction,
Site Administrators
by District and School Level and Type*

| | School Levels | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Elementary | | | Middle/Junior High | | | Senior High | | | Total |
| District | S | S/R | R | S | S/R | R | S | S/R | R | Ave. |
| Cincinatti | | 4 | | | | | | | | 4.00 |
| Long Beach | 2<br>3 | | | | 3 | 3.5 | | | 4<br>5 | 3.42 |
| Los Angeles | 2 | | 4 | | 4 | 4 | | 4.33 | 5 | 3.89 |
| Philadelphia | 2 | 3.33 | 5<br>2 | | | 1.25<br>1 | | | | 2.43 |
| Seattle | | 5<br>4 | | | | | | | | 4.50 |
| Average | 2.25 | 4.08 | 3.67 | - | 3.50 | 2.44 | - | 4.33 | 4.67 | 3.40 |
| Average by school level | | 3.30 | | | 2.79 | | | 4.58 | | |

*Type Respondent
S = Sending Site Administrators
S/R = Sending and Receiving, or Unknown Type Site Administrators
R = Receiving Site Administrators

Several important observations can be made. All must be tempered by the small number of cases on which they are based. First, there was relatively little difference in satisfaction between the districts which maintain some form of express routing and those which have abandoned the program. Seattle's transportation official and Cincinnati's integration official each expressed satisfaction ranging from neutral to positive (a three and a four, respectively). The levels of satisfaction of the two cities' site administrators were even higher, averaging 4.33 for three administrators, higher than the overall average for site administrators.

Participating principals in Seattle were quite pleased with express routing. Apparently when their desegregation program was initially implemented, individual schools or sets of schools (in this case a triad) exchanging students could decide on their own whether to select residential/neighborhood pickup or express routing. The participating principals themselves (along with their local communities) selected express routing for reasons of safety and security. As one principal stated, they "made it work." Supervision was largely provided by CETA-funded aides. When that source of funding (and the

supervision to monitor students) disappeared after several years, succeeding principals requested adoption of the district's residential/neighborood pickup.

On the basis of limited data, it seems that the Cincinnati staff, too, were relatively pleased with express routing. However, parents were not. As one transportation official put it, it was "generally a public relations problem. Parents didn't want kids walking more than a half mile. More working parents couldn't supervise at stops." As the integration program official expressed it, there were "not any [disadvantages] except accommodating the clientele required residential pickup." Basically the system was "changed for convenience of clientele." However, the current residential pickup system is too expensive, and the Cincinnati integration official indicated that the integration program is considering changing back to express routing.

Second, receiving sites were generally more satisfied with express routing than sending sites. For all practical purposes, express routing is just like any other busing system from the standpoint of a site that mainly receives students from other areas. It is the sending sites that have to deal with the supervision of potentially large numbers of children. This can best be seen in Long Beach, where integration officials deliberately chose two site administrators for interview whose schools had 700 and 1,500 students bused out. These administrators rated express routing with a '3' and '2,' respectively.

There is one major exception, however. If one looks at the data in Tables 2 and 3, it is evident that Philadelphia site administrators have the lowest opinion of their current express routing system. With the exception of one principal, it was the receiving schools where the lowest ratings were found. Most of this dissatisfaction stemmed from the fact that school buses provided by one contract vendor were frequently very late and sometimes failed to appear altogether. Hence, the academic program of these schools was affected. As bad as the situation may have been for sending schools, it was worse for receiving schools. In addition, many of the contract drivers, particularly substitutes, did not know how to handle youngsters and were not dependable. This situation, however, did not stem from express routing. It could happen under any routing scheme. In fact, one principal who rated the current setup with a '2' stated that before the contractor took over the busing for his school he felt quite positive about the district's handling of express routing.

A third point of interest is that overall junior high and middle school principals rated express routing the lowest. While the number of cases was very small, it is interesting to note that several principals mentioned that junior high students were often the rowdiest and provided the greatest challenge to supervision.

In summary, satisfaction with express routing was on the whole quite high, even among administrators in districts where express routing was dropped. Receiving sites, whose responsibilities under express routing are more limited, generally voiced greater satisfaction, unless late or no-show buses adversely affected the academic program. Junior high and middle school students may provide the most supervisorial problems.

Advantages. The types of advantages cited for express routing by site administrators were much the same as those mentioned by transportation officials in the first survey: efficiency and safety. However, the emphasis was on the latter; principals pointed out several additional ways in which students are more secure.

Ten of twenty-one respondents mentioned advantages relating to safety and security, while only nine specified those involving efficiency (savings, simpler routing, less time on buses, etc.). Of the ten, seven mentioned the availability of help and school resources at sending sites, such as access to a telephone, help if the bus is late, shelter, and supervisors able to explain situations to children who do not know English. Five mentioned the availability of supervision, resulting in greater safety and improved behavior, and one pointed out the greater security in numbers for students.

Of the nine citing aspects of efficiency, five cited shorter routes and less time on the bus, three mentioned cost savings, and two each addressed the simplicity of routes or easier routing, greater satisfaction (or fewer complaints) in the community, and greater parental satisfaction.

Noteworthy is the fact that fully half the respondents stated these advantages in terms of the disadvantages of neighborhood pickup: they cited the lack of safety in some sections of the city, the isolation of students on neighborhood corners, the complaints of neighbors, the lack of help and shelter on corners, and the lack of supervision of students.

Disadvantages. Unlike their transportation counterparts, the most common complaint of site administrators involved the problems caused by the lateness of arrival or departure of buses (cited by nine). Closely related to this were the problems related to dealing with contract vendors (cited by seven). A related issue (mentioned by three) was the inability of some drivers (primarily contract) to deal with children.

Much of the lateness was the result of poor contractor performance, often stemming from the use of inexperienced and/or substitute drivers. Neither of these is unique to express routing; nor are they more common in express routing. However, it must be kept in mind that the lateness of buses in particular causes additional problems for sending sites--additional crowding on sites, restive students, etc.--that would not exist with residential or neighborhood pickup. (One must also remember the corollary: in many ways sending sites are also better equipped to deal with these problems than students alone at bus stops.)

The two most common problems directly related to express routing were those stemming from children congregating for pickup (crowding, lack of supervision, or poor behavior), addressed by seven principals, and the somewhat ambiguous status of sending schools with regard to pupils going off to other schools, noted by five principals. This latter set of issues included concerns of principals that bused "kids know that [we're] not their principal (cited by 1 principal)," whether or not to let the children in the school in case of bad weather or lateness of buses (2 principals), receiving calls from parents at the end of the day if bused children are not home in time (2), and some principals' preference toward having pickup points off site to avoid connotations of leaving the particular school (1).

Other problems stemmed from the sheer number of children and buses handled at some campuses and the ensuing logistical problems (cited by 3 principals), lack of convenience and complaints from parents (2 principals), the early hour of pickup (2), the difficulty of selecting pickup points, including the feeling that the school might be too far for small children (2), the need for supervision of children (2), problems created by lack of supervision (2), the problems of finding adequate supervision (1), and the difficulties created by badly-intentioned groups waiting to meet buses. Some, but by no means all, of these problems are common to busing no matter what system is used.

In summation, a large portion of the disadvantages cited revolved around poor contractor service and are not unique to express routing. However, a good many concerns, as expected, do focus on the difficulties of dealing with large numbers of congregating students, their care and supervision, and the issue of responsibility for these students. Ideally, it would be wise not to reach the numbers congregating in some schools (i.e., 700 or 1,500). Furthermore, supervision is necessary and should not be completely shouldered by current staff. Lines of responsibility and cooperation among schools and busing operations must be made very clear to all. The other side of this coin of responsibility and care concerns should also be kept in mind--children are provided <u>greater</u> service under express routing via better safety, supervision, shelter, and communications.

<u>Supervision</u>. A certain amount of supervision of large numbers of children at pickup points appears necessary. Different districts have dealt with this in different manners. Some schools handled congregating students as they would their "own" children, using the same staff if numbers of waiting students were small. In the case of Cincinnati, this included sheltering children in the building until the bus arrived.

Seattle had CETA-funded bus supervisors who rode the bus from the "barn" to the collection point, then rode to the receiving site where they worked. There was not always a monitor "on all buses, especially as funds dried up." Neighborhood and parent volunteers were also sought.

Long Beach varied its supervision by the need for it. Volunteers and college aides were used by some schools. Twenty-six aides were provided from integration funds for 17,000 students. In one elementary school busing out 700 students, two transportation aides, neighborhood women paid on an hourly basis, and a vice principal supervised from 7:00 to 8:30 in the morning, and one aide from 2:00 to 4:30 in the afternoon. In a junior high school, no special person was assigned to supervise pupils congregating in front of the school. The transportation department supplied monitors before school, while school staff supervised and dispersed arriving students at the end of the day. At another school, responsibility for supervision of the four or five busloads of children gathering was taken by the school's non-uniformed, classified security counselor. One school sending 1,500 students, with "buses coming and going all day," had one college-age student in charge of transportation all day long, as well as another for an hour-and-a-half in the morning. Receiving schools had no supervision "unless the situation warranted it." In the first few days of the year, Long Beach had "downtown security people come around to supervise and help out . . . to set the tone for the rest of the year."

In Los Angeles many schools and routes had no supervision at all. Others used parent volunteers or helpers at some of the major pickup sites. The district also provided extra staff hired as monitors, paid to ride buses and supervise. One hundred eighty (180) aides get on buses with kids and could be rotated as the need arose. There were 600 routes altogether. The busing program to balance school enrollments among underutilized and overutilized schools had no aides.

Philadelphia's transportation department generally hired monitors at pickup points where there were more than eight buses. These were paid lay people and parents or in some cases reading aides. Attendants arrived ten minutes before the first bus. Site principals at pickup points were responsible for overall supervision. There were also monitors to ride some of the buses. Some monitors worked as much as 25 hours per week, and received staff development if they were untrained.

Overall it appears that supervision is provided at sites where larger numbers of children assemble. In some cases this may be done by existing personnel (e.g., campus security, site administrators, instructional aides), in others by paid monitors, and less frequently by volunteers. Most agree that some supervision is necessary or at least desirable. The funds spent on supervision do not appear to be great in comparison to potential savings.

Parents and the Community. With the exception of Cincinnati, where community pressure apparently led to residential and neighborhood pickup replacing centralized pickup, parents and the community have not been a major problem for express routing. In Philadelphia, many parents have pulled out of express routing, but this has stemmed from the numerous problems with poor contract bus service. The children of these parents were provided free bus tokens to reach schools of attendance.

Most districts have made some effort to accommodate parents and the community. However, the majority of schools surveyed were not in the situation envisioned by planners of this second set of surveys--that is, they had not previously used neighborhood or residential pickup and then switched to express routing (even if the district had had some experience with the former prior to using express routing). They had always had express routing. Thus public relations and persuasion were not as important elements in their programs as they might be should express routing be adopted in San Diego.

In some districts and schools, parents welcomed express routing because of the additional safety, security, and supervision offered. Communications to parents emphasized and "sold" the program on that basis, on it being "good" for the students, especially in Los Angeles. Parents were happy to have their children picked up at a school versus a street corner.

Typically, initial complaints gave way to general satisfaction. In most districts there has been some negative reaction to the introduction of express routing. As one principal put it, "there was a very brief angry time." Greater walking distances are of some concern to parents; students seem to accept the changes more readily than parents. Some parents were not happy with children walking in the dark. Again, this generally has not been a greater problem than in other transportation formats. It "becomes a positive situation after it has been there awhile."

There is no indication that integration programs lost substantial numbers of students due to express routing per se. Philosophical bias against busing programs and parent reactions to poor contractor bus service have been a vastly greater problem.

Among other actions that increase parent acceptance levels are involvement of small parent committees in selection and improvement of pickup points and routes, meetings with the community and parents to explain the system (not to decide on it), use of a community advisory council, and extensive communication with the community via printed materials and other means. A general responsiveness to parent input seems to be a good idea, although, as one principal put it, there is "less of a problem of asking for special favors."

Overall, it seems wise to sell express routing on the basis of safety, citing finances and taxpayer fiscal responsibility if necessary. Districts do well to involve parents in implementing and maintaining the system, to be ready for initial negative reactions, and to be responsive to parents within the constraints of express routing. There should not be significant impact on integration program enrollment.

Cost Savings. Transportation officials indicate there were cost savings. However, rarely was any formal evaluation made of express routing or of derived savings. Estimates of savings have ranged from Seattle's 15-20 percent to Los Angeles' 40-50 percent. Most declined to estimate.

Other Factors. Express routing was not always implemented districtwide. For example, in Seattle only one triad of schools requested and implemented such a routing system.

Nor are all age groups treated the same. In Philadelphia, senior and sometimes junior high school students are transported via free tokens for public transportation while younger students are bused. In other districts the youngest students are not expected to walk as far to pickup sites. In most districts there is mixing of ages of students on buses but within the limits of the ages of students attending the school at a pickup point.

With the exception of Philadelphia and sites where contract busing has caused problems, express routing has provided more reliable bus service and shorter bus rides.

## Conclusions/Recommendations

The findings of this survey lend additional support to express routing. If express routing is expected to save significant amounts of money locally, implementation of at least a pilot express routing program is warranted.

The survey data show considerable satisfaction with express routing at all administrative levels, including school sites. Lower levels of satisfaction at some sites can be attributed primarily to poor bus service provided by some contractors, which exacerbates some ordinarily manageable problems inherent in express routing, and to extremes in the sheer numbers of students handled at some campuses. Receiving sites are not substantially affected by express routing.

Safety, security, and supervision are important advantages of express routing and assume greater importance in site administrators' and parents' thinking than in that of transportation directors. It must be recalled that these advantages are the positive side of such disadvantages as the need for supervision. These advantages are unavailable with neighborhood pickup, a point expressed by many site administrators.

Many of the disadvantages cited are not unique to express routing, revolving around poor contractor service. However, there are also additional responsibilities that come with express routing.

Supervision of students is necessary and desirable in many cases. Some of this supervision can be provided by existing staff. Some funds should be provided for monitors at sending sites. Volunteers are another possible source of help. Expenditures for supervision are not likely to offset more than a small portion of expected savings from express routing.

Some initial negative reaction to express routing is to be expected from parents. "Selling" of express routing should emphasize the merits of increased safety and security, and of financial responsibility/necessity. Ultimate acceptance of express routing may be expedited through extensive communication with parents about the new program, involvement of parents in its implementation and improvement, and general responsiveness to parents' suggestions within the constraints of express routing.

Express routing has provided significant savings in other districts and has generally offered improved reliability of service. Although most schools in this latter survey had not switched to express routing from previous neighborhood or residential pickup, data from other schools (e.g., Los Angeles) and from district officials indicate that little if any decrease in participation in integration programs can be attributed to express routing.

All in all, on the basis of contacts (through this and a previous set of surveys) with transportation officials, integration officials, and site administrators in other districts with experience in express routing, positive benefits seem to outweigh negative consequences. If our district estimates show substantial savings under express routing, the district should implement a pilot program of express routing to include several schools where magnet and VEEP programs are well established.

On the basis of this experience our district can then consider districtwide implementation of express routing.

This report was prepared by Peter D. Bell

PDB:mh

APPENDIX A

Transportation Officials

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 as great satisfaction, 1 as great dissatisfaction, and 3 as neutrality or equal satisfaction and dissatisfaction, how satisfied were you with express routing, given the goals it was to meet and any problems experienced with it?

2. Was the express routing transportation program evaluated after implementation? What were the results (forward if possible)?

3. What were the actual savings from express routing? What percent savings were there from express routing in the areas where it was used (even if the "savings" was rerouted to some other area or program unrelated to express routing)?

4. Were riding times actually shorter after implementation of express routing?

5. How early were students picked up? At what time would they have had to leave home to get to pickup points? What time were they dropped off in the afternoon?

6. Did parents have any problems with or complaints about their children being dropped off after dark and walking home in the dark? Were these major problems?

7. Was express routing done everywhere in the district or was it restricted to certain areas? What areas or neighborhoods were excluded?

8. Was express routing implemented differently at different school levels or for different aged students? If so, how? Were there different problems in dealing with the different age or grade levels?

9. Were all ages mixed on the buses? If so, what effects did this have?

10. Did bus service become more reliable under express routing?

(11) Why did participation in integration programs *increase* by 20%? What was the actual cause? Were any carrots or sticks used? (Philadelphia only)

10. Were students gathering for pickups supervised in any manner? How was this done? Were the supervisors paid? Who was responsible for the supervision: receiving site, sending site, or some other party?

11. Was parent or community approval sought before trying express routing?

12. How did you work with the community to develop understanding for express routing?

13. What were the attitudes of parents regarding the switch to express routing?

14. Was express routing implemented differently at different school levels or for different aged students? If so, how? Were there different problems in dealing with the different age or grade levels?

15. Did bus service became more reliable under express routing

EXPRESS ROUTING SURVEY NO. 2 December 5, 1986

Integration Program Officials

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 as great satisfaction, 1 as great dissatisfaction, and 3 as neutrality or equal satisfaction and dissatisfaction, how satisfied were you with express routing, given the goals it was to meet and any problems experienced with it?

2. What advantages did you find in express routing?

3. What disadvantages did you find in express routing?

4. Was the express routing transportation program evaluated after implementation? What were the results (forward if possible)? What difficulties were there? Were any evaluations done by or regarding parents? What were the results?

5. Did express routing affect recruitment or enrollment in integration programs?

6. Did the switch over to express routing affect program planning in any manner? Was it possible to do program planning early enough in the year?

7. Did the switch over to express routing affect program implementation?

8. How were students affected?

9. Were there problems involved with changed walking distances for students? If so, at what grade levels?

EXPRESS ROUTING SURVEY NO. 2 December 5, 1986

Site Administrators

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 as great satisfaction, 1 as great dissatisfaction, and 3 as neutrality or equal satisfaction and dissatisfaction, how satisfied were you with express routing, given the goals it was to meet and any problems experienced with it?

2. What advantages did you find in express routing?

3. What disadvantages did you find in express routing?

4. What problems did you have to deal with personally that stemmed from express routing?

5. What if any problems or difficulties did express routing bring to the integration program?

6. Were there any behavioral or other problems experienced at collection points (either on campus or on major arteries)? What specific problems did you experience?

7. Were students gathering for pickups supervised in any manner? How was this done? Were the supervisors paid?

8. How were students affected?

9. Were there problems involved with changed walking distances for students?

10. What were the attitudes of parents regarding the switch to express routing?

11. How did you work with the community to develop understanding for express routing?

12. Did bus service become more reliable under express routing?